



SOUTHEAST NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 42, Number 4

November-December 1994

SEC Women “Do What They Can Do” Well!

Coming together for friendship and renewal, over 100 UCC women from the Southeast Conference gathered at Shocco Springs Conference Center at Talladega, Alabama for their biannual retreat on October 7-9th. The theme for the retreat was “She has done what she could ...” from Mark 14:8.

Rev. Mrs. Helen Bruch Pearson drew upon her book, *Do What You Have the Power to Do* and other “theological studies” to present two gently powerful “sermons” to inspire the gathered community. The theme was enriched by engaging new worship opportunities, by joyous singing and by the gifts and fellowship of our sisters in faith.

The spirit of such a gathering and the nourishment received to do what one can in the world cannot be conveyed ... only experienced. More opportunities to experience will be awaiting at the UCC Southern Region Women’s Meeting at Blowing Rock, NC on Sept. 29th through Oct. 1st, 1995 and in 1996, at the National UCC Women’s Meeting at Boston, MA on June 27-30th. UCC women should start making plans to attend now.

ADDENDUM:

Thanks go out to those individuals who dreamed of and implemented the Iowa and SEC Partnership. Because of that partnership, four Iowa women traveled to Talladega for the Women’s Retreat, Oct. 7-9, and found and enjoyed “instant sisterhood” in an excellently planned mix of inspiration, worship, learning, sharing, humor and music.

Miriam Cline, Irene Englemann, Earlene Hentzel and Audrey Seyb had much to remember and to reflect upon as they traveled back home. They feel confident that this opportunity has added much to cement the partnership and hope that more exchanges can be experienced in the future. To our Sisters in the South ... we are looking forward to seeing many of you again, both in Iowa and in the Southeast Conference.

Audrey Seyb

Pick A Season ... Do A Campaign!

What about ...

1. an Epiphany emphasis (Jan. 1-Feb. 26)

2. a Lenten emphasis on mission (Mar. 1-Apr. 9)

or ...

3. a Pentecost emphasis on ministry (Apr. 23-June 4)

Choose your season! Designate a four-week period of emphasis. Do a "Make a Difference" campaign. Sketch out a plan, using the excellent materials that were mailed to each church months ago. Do the Mission Study. Give special attention to the Case Study, which spells out the imperative needs which must be met if our beloved United Church of Christ is to be ready for the awesome challenges of the soon-to-dawn new century. Culminate the four weeks of emphasis on Make a Difference Sunday, when members will make monthly pledges over a three-year period.

Why your response? Because we fall short of our SEC Challenge Goal by only \$21,110. To date, we have \$228,890 in commitments toward our Challenge of \$250,000. BUT THAT AMOUNT COMES FROM ONLY 78 INDIVIDUALS AND CHURCHES. Does that mean that only 78 of our 7,856 members care about the future of our denomination? Surely not. The rest of you, come on! Help us cover the remaining small amount of \$21,110. Please, right away, fill in a Covenant Form indicating the time of your campaign and your hoped-for local church goal and mail it to the Cleveland office. Time is running out! The Campaign Office in Cleveland will close the end of June 1995.

Call me if you need materials or help.

John R. Lackey
SEC Campaign Director
Phone: 615-690-3127

Kurtz & Kurtz

An interesting and historic event occurred recently at St. John's United Church. The church celebrated its 125th anniversary. They listened to Rev. Bob Kurtz challenge them to follow the commitment of the German settlers who founded the church. But it wasn't Bob Kurtz's church in Cullman.

Bob's brother, the Rev. Charles Kurtz, is pastor of St. John's UCC in Ackley, Iowa and they were celebrating their anniversary to which Rev. Bob was invited to speak. Both churches have the same name, the same heritage, and near-identical facilities and membership. In addition, the Iowa Conference of the United Church and the Southeast Conference are linked as partnership conferences.

CONFERENCE COMMENTS:

THE ADVENT SEASON

"Learning to Believe ... Acting on Hope!"

When God acts, believers are astonished! The Christmas story in Luke tells of Zechariah the priest being promised a son; his unbelief question, "How can this

possibly be?" Then Elizabeth and Mary are talking about God's new life, the coming birth of a son ... and Mary asked, "How can this be?" The promises of God confound us into amazement and wonderment. The desire to trust teeters on the edge of dis-belief. The birth story affirms God's doing the unbelievable: "With God nothing will be impossible."

That message may strike us this Advent as we hear again the old stories; it may surprise us as God works anew. The birth of Jesus occurred to bring good news and new life and it is a perpetually new story that becomes "Christ being born anew in you and me" in unexpected ways and times. God of the impossible makes new life possible.

As I completed six years with you this fall, I was reflecting on this significance. God has certainly brought us through unexpected times, and we recognize God's calling us to be a new people in this time and place. "Learning to believe ... again, afresh, anew" has happened as we have "acted on hope." God has certainly given us new dynamics, visions, resources and calling. My personal testimony is to share this theme of gratitude for me and all of us: *"LEARNING TO BELIEVE ... ACTING IN HOPE."* I trust it shall be for you this Christmas. God bless!

Roger Knight
Conference Minister

Just A Word About Church Development ...

Sheares Memorial – Chattanooga; Center Congregational – Atlanta; Amistad – Marietta; Gwinnett Community – Lilburn; Southeast DeKalb – (Exploratory); Rush Memorial – Atlanta; Bibb County – Macon; and Columbia – South Carolina. All have something in common that very important to consider.

Regardless of their current status as church development projects, they are commendable examples of an intensive outreach for reality in our faith community. The money may run out in some instances; leadership, both local and national, may falter at times; conscientious new church members may "burn-out" under the strain.

But as long as there is the promise of expanding God's embrace of love, justice and peace through Jesus Christ, new churches will be envisioned. Some will be established and others will be changed or revived. In light of this, it seems just a little short of profane to apply the political concepts of success and failure to this Godly process at any time or any place. I began to learn this early in the experiences of my own ministry.

I left two small struggling churches I served in succession immediately following my ordination. I gave up on both after what I deemed, in each case, to be fruitless struggling for mere survival. These two respective faith communities that I, in presumptuous judgment, left for dead have over the years, remained very much alive and well.

There were, on the other hand, strong vibrant churches nearby of other denominations that I secretly envied for their inspirational singing, preaching, and

overall appeal to the local communities. Everything they were at that time deepened my own sense of frustration and failure.

However, I have more recently learned that two such promising churches have failed or experienced a serious loss of their brightness and luster over the years. This fact brings no joy or satisfaction to me, but it does confirm the sovereignty of God's presence that serves to regulate and inspire more appropriate perspectives on righteous endeavors.

I commend the appropriation of this presence over the adversarial and judgmental that is used sometimes to bolster self interests or sagging self esteem among those of us engaged in one way or another in church development activities.

Mitchell Johnson
Associate Conference Minister

Neighbors in Need Grants Available in 1995

The Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society is pleased to be able to offer several grants for programs or projects which focus on "Women in the Work Place." These grants are made possible by the CCW's share of the 1994 NIN offering and are limited to projects in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, sponsored by or related to UCC conferences, local churches or institutions. Deadline for receiving proposals is JANUARY 1, 1995. Submit proposals or tell others about the availability of these grants. Most will range from \$1000-\$3000. First preference will be given to groups or conferences who have not received previous CCW grants, and special consideration will be given to projects which address the issues of "Women in the Work Place."

Projects seeking grants may include education, consciousness raising and advocacy as well as direct service to women's programs or events. Projects should be planned by or with women, and must have significant and ongoing participation of UCC local churches, UCC church leaders or institutions related to the UCC. Local church women's groups are especially encouraged to submit grant proposals.

Proposals should be submitted to the Coordinating Center for Women (with a copy to your conference minister) by JANUARY 1, 1995. Request forms and additional instructions may be obtained from the Conference Office, or from Mary Sue Gast, Executive Director, 700 Prospect Avenue East, Cleveland, Ohio 44115. Telephone: (216) 736-2150; FAX: (216) 736-2156.

OCWM GIVING 1994

Ala/Tenn Assn.	7/1-9/30/94	1994
Alpine, King's Chapel	.00	.00
Athens, Trinity Congregational	300.00	300.00
Belvidere, 1st UC	2,200.00	3,522.75
Birmingham, 1st UC	1,200.00	2,200.00

Birmingham, Pilgrim	1,350.00	3,600.00
Chattanooga, 1st CC	.00	.00
Chattanooga, Pilgrim	3,638.17	7,346.58
Chattanooga, Sheares	.00	358.00
Crossville, UCC	750.00	2,580.00
Cullman, St. John's	2,225.00	6,875.00
Deer Lodge, Congregational	300.00	900.00
Fairfield Glade, CC	925.00	2,775.00
Garden City, Congregational	115.50	346.50
Glenmary, Congregational CC	.00	.00
Hanceville, Mountain Grove	100.00	100.00
Knoxville, Church of the Savior	.00	2,250.00
Marion, 1st Congregational	.00	.00
Montgomery, 1st	.00	.00
Nashville, 1st UC	1,500.00	4,000.00
Nashville, Brookmeade	450.00	675.00
Nashville, Howard	.00	600.00
Pleasant Hill, CC	6,313.65	13,813.65
Robbins, Barton Chapel	.00	.00
Sweetwater, 1st	.00	250.00
Talladega, 1st Congregational	.00	200.00
Tougaloo, Union UCC	.00	.00
United Church – Huntsville	1,500.00	4,500.00
Waverly, UCC	40.00	120.00
	22,907.32	56,337.48

East Ala/W. Ga Assn.

Alex City, First	.00	.00
Columbus, United	.00	.00
Dadeville, Elder	.00	.00
E. Tallassee, CC	.00	.00
Eclectic, Watson's Chapel	.00	.00
Five Points, State Line	.00	.00
LaFayette, Pleasant Grove	533.00	848.00
LaGrange, Hillside	.00	.00
LaGrange, United	168.00	168.00
Lanett	475.00	2,014.00
Langdale	190.00	190.00
Phenix City, Russell Woods	380.00	760.00
Pine Forest	.00	.00
Pine Mountain, Oak Grove	.00	.00
Roanoke, Antioch	.00	570.00
Roanoke, Bethany	.00	.00
Roanoke, Forest Home	.00	.00

Roanoke, New Hope	.00	570.00
Roanoke, North Main	.00	380.00
Roanoke, Rock Stand	.00	.00
Valley, Todd Congregational	.00	.00
Wadley, Corinth Christian	119.00	238.00
Wedowee, Noon Day	.00	.00
Woodbury, Jones Chapel	456.00	1,824.00
	2,321.00	7,562.00

Ga/S. Carolina Assn.

Atlanta, Central	6,694.35	20,081.85
Atlanta, First	5,500.00	8,250.00
Atlanta, Rush	450.00	500.00
Atlanta, Southwest	.00	.00
Atlanta, UCC	.00	.00
Beachton, Evergreen	.00	495.00
Buford, Duncan's Creek	.00	.00
Center Congregational Church	55.00	210.00
Central Congregational Women	.00	200.00
Charleston, Circular	1,333.32	2,666.64
Charleston, Plymouth	.00	1,350.00
Columbia, Fellowship	.00	.00
Demorest, Federated	.00	118.06
Dewy Rose, Liberty	.00	.00
GA-SC Association	.00	2,200.00
Jonesboro, Trinity	1,800.00	5,400.00
Marietta, Pilgrimage	1,251.00	4,085.00
Midway, Congregational Church	.00	600.00
Savannah, First	300.00	600.00
Thomasville, Bethany	200.00	300.00
	17,583.67	47,056.55

S. Ala-N.W. Fla Assn.

Andalusia, Antioch	.00	1,400.00
Andalusia, 1st CC	110.00	330.00
Baker, Good Hope	.00	.00
Baker, Pyron	.00	.00
Bonifay, New Effort	.00	.00
Brantley, Indian Creek	.00	.00
Brantley, Liberty	100.00	300.00
Clio, New Hope	.00	.00
	210.00	2,080.00

Jack Batten To Lead Tax Seminar

IRS has announced that it will examine 1994 tax returns of ministers. Jack Batten, Stewardship Council, will help alert you to “picture perfect” returns. Jack spends time each year attending “school” to learn the latest in reporting your income. Be sure to put this seminar on your calendar and attend! The date is Thursday, January 12th, 1995 in Jonesboro, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Carl Beyer To Lead Pre-Retirement Seminars

We encourage all clergy and church personnel to attend one of the three Pre-Retirement seminars to be held on March 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1995. Beyer, who is Vice President, Conference Relations for the Pension Board, will be sharing information on all matters relating to annuities and planning for retirements. All meetings will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 1st at Atlanta, Central Congregational UCC; March 2nd – Birmingham, Pilgrim Congregational UCC; and March 3rd – Pleasant Hill, Community Church.

UCC Supported Colleges Share Federal Grant

Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse College are among 16 historically black colleges and universities awarded a total of \$4.25 million to help prevent violence among black men. Other schools involved in the project are LeMoyne-Owen College, Memphis; Talladega College, Talladega; and Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, MS.

School Kits for Bosnia

Is your Sunday School or your church looking for a worthwhile project which can involve everyone? Why not organize a group to assemble “school kids” which are much needed in war-torn Bosnia where homes have been destroyed, playgrounds are turned into minefields and formerly happy children have memories only of war.

Kits are easy to assemble. Each should contain:

- 2 – 8-1/2 x 11-inch lined writing pads
- 1 – blunt scissors
- 1 – 30 cm. metric ruler (rulers with inches on one side and centimeters on the other are acceptable)
- 1 – pencil sharpener
- 6 – unsharpened pencils with erasers
- 1 – 2-1/2-inch eraser
- 12 – sheets construction paper
- 1 – box of crayons (8 crayons)
- 1 – 12 x 14-inch cloth bag with cloth handles

Place all items in bag, fold top over and secure with two large rubber bands.

Kits should be packed in sturdy boxes, tied with string and sent prepaid to Church World Service, 500 Main Street, P.O. Box 188, New Windsor, MD 21776. Clearly mark your church's return address.

Your assistance is urgently required to insure that needy children in Bosnia and other emergency situations worldwide have the necessary tools to learn and grown. These gifts will be tangible expressions of love and peace.

Southeast Conference "Son" Leads Mission Activity

The story of God's calling to Millard Fuller is a stirring one. Millard grew up in our Lanett Congregational Christian Church and was president of the Southeast Conference Youth and a national leader in the United Church of Christ. He became founder and president of Habitat for Humanity, and in 18 years, has helped forge Habitat for Humanity, and in 18 years, has helped forge Habitat into a worldwide housing ministry. His recent book, *Theology of the Hammer*, challenges us to be involved in Christ's mission.

On February 18th, the 200th house will be dedicated in Americus and Habitat now builds about 10,000 houses per year.

Millard is now Co-General Chairperson of our Southeast Conference Make A Difference Campaign, emphasizing his convictions of the Church's need to reach out to grow in evangelism and mission, and emphatically including youth, the perpetual next generation of the Church. We are grateful for Millard's, and his wife Linda's, witness and dedication.

Christian Education Commission of SEC ... A Report

We look forward to another year of work together and happily welcome our Youth Coordinator, Tim Klein. We are looking forward to great things happening in that arena.

Reports from the church who are using *The World Among Us* curriculum are very satisfying. We are calling all chairs of the Christian Education committees of the associations in the SEC to meet us at the Conference Program Planning Meeting set for November 18-19 at Trinity, Jonesboro.

Yubenia Prigmore
Chairperson

Churches Seeking a Pastor:

Charleston, SC – Circular
Savannah, GA – First
Chattanooga, TN – Pilgrim
Roanoke, AL – North Main
Clio, AL – New Hope

AROUND THE CONFERENCE

Athens, Ala. – Trinity UCC has obtained the historic AMA Schools ... and is doing community programming now. Congratulations to all! Paul Moore is pastor.

Chattanooga, TN – Pilgrim Congregational and Sheares Memorial UCC have had some joint worship and programs. D. E. Bartholomew is interim at Pilgrim; James Foucher is pastor at Sheares.

Nashville, TN – Brookmeade UCC voted to declare itself an Open and Affirming church. Dan Rosemergy is pastor.

Pleasant Hill, TN has had groundbreaking for its new church addition. Ed Schneider is pastor.

Macon, GA – a new UCC fellowship began mid-week gatherings, Bible study and worship. Rev. Lester Ariail is organizing coordinator.

Bethany UCC, Thomasville and Evergreen UCC, Beachton, has had joint gatherings with the UCC of Tallahassee, FL. Ellis Carr, Artis Johnson, and Loey Powell are pastors.

Birmingham, First – Rodney Franklin began as pastor Nov. 1st.

Robbins, TN – Barton Chapel, Hubert Terry returned as pastor.

Knoxville, TN – The Rev. John & Karen Gill welcomed their new daughter, India Rachel, born October 24th.

Charleston, Plymouth UCC – has new newsletter ... looks fine! Jim Fields is pastor.

Jonesboro, Trinity UCC – Barry Mick began as associate pastor and is also a student at seminary.

Sympathy is expressed to Arthur Dailey, pastor of Alexander City whose wife, Elma, died in August; to the family of Olin Sheppard, pastor of New Hope, Roanoke, who died in August; to the Rev. Andrew Young whose wife, Jean, died in Sept.

Chattanooga, TN – Pilgrim, voted to relocate.

Atlanta, First – voted a major building project and on Nov. 13th, installed Dr. Susan Newman as pastor.

Youth Council Plans Rally

In October of this year, the Youth Council met at the First Congregational UCC in Talladega, Alabama for a sharing and planning session. Out of this session came plans for a Youth Rally for January 14th and 15th, to be held at Pilgrim UCC in Birmingham, and will include a "lock-in" on Friday night and a trip to the Galleria Mall and a work project on Saturday. Many other activities are planned and registration is FREE (thanks to the Southeast Conference).

Registration "flyers" have been mailed to all the churches which include a tentative schedule and map. If your church has not received these, contact Rev. Renae Koehler, Pilgrim UCC Church, 3801 Montclair Road, Birmingham, AL 35213 or call (205) 879-1624. You may also call Tim Klein, SEC Youth Director at (205) 734-4309.

NOTE: The Youth Council invites input from all in the SEC with ideas and suggestions for other activities.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR, 1995

Jan. 12	Tax Seminar with Jack Batten (especially for clergy)
March 1-3	Pre-Retirement Seminar with Carl Beyer
Feb. 5-11	Women's Week: all churches observe!
Apr. 28-30	Mini-Camp, Laguna Beach, FL
June 9-11	SEC Annual Meeting – Simpsonwood Retreat Center near Atlanta
June 11-17	Appalachian Work Camp at Morgan County, Deer Lodge, TN – for SEC & Iowa churches. Plan to help out. Contact Liz Clement.
June 29-July 4	General Synod in Oakland, Calif. Registration forms available in Conference Office also.
Jan. 23-Feb. 6	Cluster meetings will be held throughout the Conference. Every church in attendance, please! Structures Committee proposal for our future in the SEC will be presented. Your participation and feedback is crucial! UCC Yearbook reports on every church and filled in. There will also be other reports of congregational and Conference life.

OBSERVE UCC WOMEN'S WEEK

Feb. 5-11, 1995

THEME: "Attentive to God's Wisdom"

Worship and program material are available from the Conference Office.

THE SOUTHEAST NEWS

Published by the Southeast Conference

United Church of Christ

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Publication schedule: February, May, August, October, December

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This transcription was recorded on September 19 and 21, 2013 by Mike Stroud, director of Project 66-16, an initiative to record, compile and write the history of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

PROJECT

